

TRUE CRIME

COLD CASES

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JAM-MASTER JAY

When Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls died, that was bad. But it was not completely unexpected. Their motto seemed to be “Live by the sword, die by the sword.”

But Jam-Master Jay was different. He was no thug. He was a 37-year-old married man. He had three kids. He came from a middle-class background. His music reflected what was going on in the streets. But it wasn't what you'd call hardcore.



Run-DMC members (left to right) Joseph Simmons (Run), Darryl McDaniels (DMC), and Jason Mizell (Jam Master Jay) pose for a May 1999 portrait in Los Angeles.

Walk This Way!

Run-DMC got together with the rock band Aerosmith in 1986. They did a rap version of the Aerosmith's song "Walk This Way." The classic video featured both groups.

The song's success made Run-DMC's album *Raising Hell* their most successful ever. It was also one of the top-selling hip-hop albums of all time. It blurred the lines between rap and rock.

On April 4, 2009, Run-DMC was *inducted* into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Run-DMC Slows Down

Throughout the 1990s, Run-DMC performed less and less. Hip-hop was changing. The group was becoming outdated.

KEY TERMS

autopsy—a study done on a dead body to find the cause of death

garrote—a corded device with handles, used for strangling

jurisdiction—authority over an area's law enforcement

ligature—something used for tying someone up, such as rope or cord

touch DNA test—a new DNA test that can take a DNA sample from an item that was touched

DID YOU KNOW?

In August 2006, a man named John Mark Karr said he had killed JonBenét. But a DNA test proved he was not involved. He had made a false confession.

JONBENÉT RAMSEY

JonBenét Ramsey was a beautiful little girl. She had long blonde curls, huge blue eyes, and a sweet smile. She was a born entertainer. She loved to sing, dance, and swing her Hula-hoop.

She liked playing outside, too. She also took violin lessons. In many ways, JonBenét was like other six-year-olds. She had many friends at school.

Beauty contests made her seem special, though. She was like a little princess.

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When the Ramseys got home, they were tired but happy. Patsy and her husband John put JonBenét to bed around 10:30 p.m.

It was the last time they saw her alive.

Kidnapped?

Patsy Ramsey came downstairs early the next morning. There was a three-page, handwritten letter at the bottom of the staircase. With dawning horror, Patsy realized it was a ransom note. Oddly, it asked for \$118,000. That was the exact amount of John Ramsey's Christmas bonus.

There were other strange things about the note, too. Near the end, it said, "Don't try to grow a brain, John." That line is from the movie *Speed*. The note was signed "Victory! S.B.T.C." That may have been a satanic clue. Those initials stand for "Saved By The Cross."



JonBenét Ramsey's murder shocks the nation.

But by then, the crime scene had been contaminated. Critics later said the police didn't do a good job that day. They had let people in and out of the house. They had not searched the neighborhood. They hadn't talked to neighbors.

JonBenét's *autopsy* was performed on December 27. It showed she'd been strangled and had a skull fracture.

Most Famous Cold Case Ever

For years the Boulder Police Department tried to blame the Ramseys. First they said John did it. Then they said Patsy did it. At one point JonBenét's brother, Burke, was even accused. He was only nine at the time of the murder.

Boulder police didn't have much murder investigation experience. They were also having "turf wars." The FBI had been called in. At first everyone thought

sample. Then it got even smaller: “If you can see it, you can analyze it.”

Today, the sample doesn’t need to be visible at all. A *touch DNA test* can find DNA on anything touched by a person. People leave behind skin cells on everything they touch. The touch DNA test works on just about any kind of surface. It can even work on something rough, like cloth.

Ramseys Cleared

In 2008 this new DNA test was used on JonBenét’s clothing. The touch DNA test provided a major break in the case. Scientists found the DNA of an unknown male in two places. It was on JonBenét’s underwear and long johns. This confirms the “unknown intruder” idea. Investigators ran the DNA through